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ARUBA TODAY

Tuesday
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**Rhythms Circus Company Aruba:
putting Aruba's name on the world
stage**

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Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

The U.S. marks 22 years since 9/11 with tributes and tears, from ground zero to Alaska

By JENNIFER PELTZ and KAREN MATTHEWS
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — From ground zero to small towns, Americans looked back Monday on 9/11 with moments of silence, tearful words and appeals to teach younger generations about the terror attacks that struck the nation exactly 22 years before.

"For those of us who lost people on that day, that day is still happening. Everybody else moves on. And you find a way to go forward, but that day is always happening for you," Edward Edelman said as he arrived at New York's World Trade Center to honor his slain brother-in-law, Daniel McGinley. President Joe Biden was due at a ceremony on a military base in Anchorage, Alaska.

Continued on Page 2



First responders work at ground zero after the Sept.11 attacks, Sept. 12, 2001, in New York. Associated Press

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The U.S. marks 22 years since 9/11 with tributes and tears, from ground zero to Alaska

Continued from Front

His visit, en route to Washington from a trip to India and Vietnam, is a reminder that the impact of 9/11 was felt in every corner of the nation, however remote. Nearly 3,000 people were killed when hijacked planes crashed into the trade center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field, in an attack that reshaped American foreign policy and domestic fears.

On that day, "we were one country, one nation, one people, just like it should be. That was the feeling — that everyone came together and did what we could, where we were at, to try to help," Eddie Ferguson, the fire-rescue chief in Virginia's Goochland County, said in an interview last week.

The predominantly rural county of 25,000 people is more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) from the Pentagon and more than three times as far from New York. But Goochland County has a local Sept. 11 memorial and holds two public anniversary commemorations, one focused on first responders and another honoring all the victims.

At ground zero, Vice President Kamala Harris joined other dignitaries at the ceremony on the National Sept. 11 Memorial plaza. Instead of remarks from political figures, the event fea-



Sam Pulia places flags before the commemoration ceremony of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

tures victims reading the names of the dead and delivering brief personal messages.

Some included patriotic declarations about American values and thanked first responders and the military. One lauded the Navy SEALs who killed al-Qaida leader and 9/11 plotter Osama bin Laden in Pakistan in 2011. Another appealed for peace and justice. One acknowledged the many lives lost in the post-9/11 "war on terror." And many shared personal reflections on missing loved ones.

"Though we never met, I

am honored to carry your name and legacy with me," said Manuel João DaMota Jr., who was born after his father and namesake died.

Jason Inoa commemorated his grandfather, Jorge Velazquez. The 20-year-old Inoa said speaking at the ceremony was "very nerve-wracking," but he did it for his grandmother, who has Alzheimer's disease.

"The one thing she does remember is her husband," he said.

Biden, a Democrat, will be the first president to commemorate Sept. 11

in Alaska, or anywhere in the western U.S. He and his predecessors have gone to one or another of the attack sites in most years, though Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Barack Obama each marked the anniversary on the White House lawn at times. Obama followed one of those observances by recognizing the military with a visit to Fort Meade in Maryland.

First lady Jill Biden is due to lay a wreath at the 9/11 memorial at the Pentagon, where a giant American flag hung over the side of

the building, bells tolled, and musicians played taps at 9:37 a.m., the precise moment American Airlines Flight 77 hit the military headquarters.

"As the years go by, it may feel that the world is moving on, or even forgetting what happened here on Sept. 11, 2001," said Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who deployed to Iraq in the war that followed the attack. "But please know this: The men and women of the Department of Defense will always remember."

Harris' husband, Doug Emhoff, is expected at an afternoon ceremony at the Flight 93 National Memorial near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where one of the hijacked jets crashed after passengers tried to storm the cockpit.

At a morning observance, Rabbi Jeffrey Myers of Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue — where a gunman killed 11 worshippers nearly five years ago in the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history — stressed the importance of making sure younger people know and understand what happened on 9/11.

"With memory comes responsibility, the determination to share our stories with this next generation, so that through them, our loved ones continue to live," he told the gathering. □



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken speaks during a business roundtable meeting at the Government Office in Hanoi, Vietnam, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023.

Associated Press

By **MATTHEW LEE**
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration has

U.S. makes deal with Iran to swap prisoners and release \$6 billion in frozen Iranian funds

cleared the way for the release of five American citizens detained in Iran by issuing a blanket waiver for international banks to transfer \$6 billion in frozen Iranian money from South Korea to Qatar without fear of U.S. sanctions. In addition, as part of the deal, the administration has agreed to release five Iranian citizens held in the United States.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken signed off on the deal late last week, but Congress was not notified

of the decision until Monday, according to the notification, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

The waiver is likely to draw criticism of President Joe Biden from Republicans and others that the deal will boost the Iranian economy at a time when Iran poses a growing threat to U.S. troops and Mideast allies. The waiver means that European, Middle Eastern and Asian banks will not run afoul of U.S. sanctions

in converting the money frozen in South Korea and transferring it to Qatar's central bank, where it will be held for Iran to use for the purchase of humanitarian goods.

The transfer of the \$6 billion was the critical element in the prisoner release deal, which saw four of the five American detainees transferred from Iranian jails into house arrest last month. The fifth detainee had already been under house arrest. □

As U.S. East Coast ramps up offshore wind power projects, much remains unknown

By **WAYNE PARRY**

Associated Press

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, N.J.

(AP) — As the U.S. races to build offshore wind power projects, transforming coastlines from Maine to South Carolina, much remains unknown about how the facilities could affect the environment.

And that worries some people, particularly those who depend on the sea for their livelihoods.

"We don't have the science to know what the impact will be," said Jim Hutchinson, managing editor of *The Fisherman* magazine in New Jersey. "The attitude has been, 'Build it and we'll figure it out.'"

The wind power industry disputes such claims, citing years of studies.

So far, four offshore wind projects have been approved by the federal government for the U.S. East Coast, according to the American Clean Power Association. Vineyard Wind will place 62 turbines about 15 miles (24 kilometers) off Martha's Vineyard, generating enough electricity to power 400,000 homes.



The five turbines of America's first offshore wind farm, owned by the Danish company, Orsted, stand off the coast of Block Island, R.I., on Oct. 17, 2022.

South Fork Wind will place 12 turbines in the waters off Long Island, New York, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) east of Montauk Point, to power 70,000 homes. And Ocean Wind I, the first of two Orsted projects in New Jersey, will place 98 turbines about 15 miles off Atlantic City and Ocean City, generating power for 500,000 homes.

Those projects are in addition to the planned Revolution Wind development, about 15 miles southeast of Point Judith, Rhode Island, with 65 turbines powering nearly 250,000 homes. Numerous others have been proposed, and the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management plans to review at least 16 offshore wind projects by 2025.

"All this is happening so fast," said Greg Cudnik, a recreational fisherman, bait and tackle shop owner and party boat captain from Ship Bottom, New Jersey. "Science takes time." A joint study in March by two federal scientific agencies and the commercial fishing industry documents numerous impacts that offshore wind power projects

could have on fish and marine mammals, including noise, vibration, electromagnetic fields and heat transfer that could alter the environment.

Like numerous existing studies, the report pointed out the complexities of how the structures and cables might interact with marine life. For instance, turbines can attract some fish and repel others.

The March study said large underwater platforms are rapidly colonized by smaller, bottom-dwelling marine life, including shellfish and crabs, which in turn attract larger predators like black sea bass.

At the same time, cloudy water from turbine operations, noise, vibrations and electromagnetic fields could also make species leave an area.

In most instances, report authors agreed that more studies are needed.

Research in other countries also is also nuanced. Some European studies have shown that crabs and lobster are attracted to harder sea bottoms that support wind turbines. □

Associated Press

DraftKings apologizes for sports betting offer referencing 9/11 terror attacks

By **WAYNE PARRY**

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)

— Sports betting company DraftKings apologized Monday after using the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks to entice people to bet on baseball and football games on the anniversary of the tragedy that killed nearly 3,000 people.

The Boston-based company offered users a 9/11-themed promotion that required three New York-based teams the Yankees, Mets and Jets to win their games Monday, the 22nd anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon and the downing of a passenger jet in a field in Pennsyl-

vania.

After an outcry on social media from people offended by the promotion titled "Never Forget," DraftKings took it down and apologized.

"We sincerely apologize for the featured parlay that was shared briefly in commemoration of 9/11," the company wrote. "We respect the significance of this day for our country and especially for the families of those who were directly affected."

Brett Eagleson, whose father, Bruce, was killed in the World Trade Center, runs a families and first responders organization called 9/11 Justice. He decried the DraftKings offer as "tone-

deaf."

"It is shameful to use the national tragedy of 9/11 to promote a business," he told *The Associated Press*. "We need accountability, justice and closure, not self-interest and shameless promotion."

The company would not say how many people placed bets as a result of the offer, nor whether those bets remain valid or whether they have been canceled.

DraftKings is one of the leading companies offering legal sports betting in the U.S., which has grown rapidly since the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for it in 2018. Two-thirds of the country now offers it.



The DraftKings logo is displayed at the sports betting company headquarters, May 2, 2019, in Boston.

Associated Press

Bets of the type DraftKings offered, in which multiple games or outcomes are bundled into a single wager, are extremely profit-

able for sports books, and offering gamblers preselected groupings, called parlays, is an important part of sports wagering. □

The New York ethics commission that pursued former Governor Cuomo is unconstitutional, a judge says

By **MICHAEL HILL**
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A commission created last year to enforce ethics rules for New York state's employees and elected officials violates the state's constitution because it is too independent, a state judge ruled Monday in a decision that could gut the body's power to combat corruption and influence-peddling.

The ruling came in a lawsuit filed by former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who has been fighting an attempt by the Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government to force him to forfeit \$5 million he got for writing a book about his administration's efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The commission was formed by the Legislature and Gov. Kathy Hochul to replace a previous ethics body that had been criticized for not being independent enough.

The lawmakers said they wanted to increase public



New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo prepares to board a helicopter after announcing his resignation, Aug. 10, 2021, in New York.

trust in government after Cuomo's 2021 resignation in a sexual harassment scandal.

The Commission investigates potential ethics and lobbying violations by state officials, employees, lobbyists and their clients. Com-

mission findings involving state lawmakers are referred to the Legislative Ethics Commission for enforcement.

But in his decision, New York Supreme Court Justice Thomas Marcelle said the commission's very inde-

pendence makes it a problem under the state constitution.

Specifically, the judge said enforcement of ethics laws is a power that belongs to the executive branch. The commission makes that impossible, he said, because

the governor can't control its members, force them to explain their actions, or remove them for neglecting their duties.

"Our Constitution, which so carefully allocates power among the three branches, will not permit those powers to be transferred to (an) independent commission amounting to an unsanctioned fourth branch of government," Marcelle wrote.

The judge said it would require an amendment to the state constitution to give that sort of power to an independent body.

State officials immediately said they were looking at appealing the trial-level judge's decision.

"Taking office in the midst of scandal and a crisis in State government, Governor Hochul worked with the Legislature to craft a new, truly independent ethics body that could begin to restore New Yorkers' faith in their public officials," Hochul spokesman Avi Small said. □

Associated Press

U.S. sets record for expensive weather disasters in a year -- with four months yet to go

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP Science Writer

The deadly firestorm in Hawaii and Hurricane Idalia's watery storm surge helped push the United States to a record for the number of weather disasters that cost \$1 billion or more. And there's still four months to go on what's looking more like a calendar of calamities.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced Monday that there have been 23 weather extreme events in America that cost at least \$1 billion this year through August, eclipsing the year-long record total of 22 set in 2020.

So far this year's disasters have cost more than \$57.6 billion and claimed at least

253 lives.

And NOAA's count doesn't yet include Tropical Storm Hilary's damages in hitting California and a deep

drought that has struck the South and Midwest because those costs are still be totaled, said Adam Smith, the NOAA applied



Ryan Orosco, of Brentwood, carries his son Johnny, 7, on his back while his wife Amanda Orosco waits at the front porch to be rescued from their flooded home on Bixler Road in Brentwood, Calif., Jan. 16, 2023.

Associated Press

climatologist and economist who tracks the billion-dollar disasters.

"We're seeing the fingerprints of climate change all over our nation," Smith said in an interview Monday. "I would not expect things to slow down anytime soon." NOAA has been tracking billion-dollar weather disasters in the United States since 1980 and adjusts damage costs for inflation. What's happening reflects a rise in the number of disasters and more areas being built in risk-prone locations, Smith said.

"Exposure plus vulnerability plus climate change is supercharging more of these into billion-dollar disasters," Smith said.

NOAA added eight new billion-dollar disasters to the

list since its last update a month ago. In addition to Idalia and the Hawaiian firestorm that killed at least 115 people, NOAA newly listed an Aug. 11 Minnesota hailstorm; severe storms in the Northeast in early August; severe storms in Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin in late July; mid-July hail and severe storms in Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Tennessee and Georgia; deadly flooding in the Northeast and Pennsylvania in the second week of July; and a late June outbreak of severe storms in Missouri, Illinois and Indiana.

"This year a lot of the action has been across the center states, north central, south and southeastern states," Smith said. □

Protests against Israel's judicial overhaul kick off at Supreme Court a day before crucial hearing

JERUSALEM (AP) — Thousands of Israeli protesters flooded the streets outside Israel's Supreme Court in Jerusalem on Monday, a day before it hears a pivotal case against the curbing of the high court's powers by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government.

Beating drums, waving blue-and-white Israeli flags and brandishing signs saying "Freedom" and "Hands off our Supreme Court!," thousands of protesters from cities nationwide swarmed the main intersection outside the high court in a mass rally against the government's deeply contentious judicial overhaul that has triggered one of the biggest domestic crises in Israeli history.

The sea of protesters hoisted up a giant banner that read "The court is supreme."

On Tuesday, all 15 of Israel's Supreme Court justices will appear on the bench for the first time ever to hear appeals by rights groups and individuals against the first major part of the overhaul, which the government pushed through parliament in July. The divisive law cancels the court's



Israeli police disperse demonstrators, mostly military reservists, who block a road outside the house of Israeli Justice Minister Yariv Levin during a protest against plans by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to overhaul the judicial system, in Modiin, Israel, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023.

ability to block government actions and appointments using the legal concept that they are "unreasonable."

Multiple hearings at the Supreme Court in the coming weeks put the country's top justices in the unprecedented position of defending their own independence and ruling on their own fate.

The court faces massive public pressure to strike down the law and has an inherent interest in preserving its powers and independence. But if it does, Netanyahu's government could ignore the ruling, setting the stage for a constitutional crisis over who has ultimate authority.

Already senior Israeli officials have hinted they

won't respect the ruling if the court rules against the law what is known as a "Basic Law" in Israel, or a major piece of legislation that serves as a sort of constitution, which Israel does not have. The court has never struck down that type of legislation before.

On Monday, hardline National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir released

a video declaring himself "against surrender."

"The reform is important for the state of Israel," he said, rejecting compromise talks reportedly underway in the president's house between Netanyahu and opposition party leader Benny Gantz. "Caving (to the opposition) at the president's house means violating right-wing values."

Earlier Monday in the central Israeli town of Modiin, hundreds of rowdy protesters, blowing horns and chanting through megaphones, thronged the home of Israeli Justice Minister Yariv Levin, the architect of the overhaul. Israeli police said they arrested six people on charges of disrupting public order and blocking roads. After a few hours, Levin left his besieged home in a sleek black car surrounded by police officers and security guards who tried to clear a path for him through the swarm of protesters.

Supporters of Netanyahu's far-right, ultra-Orthodox government say the law will prevent liberal, unelected judges from interfering with the decisions of elected lawmakers. □

Associated Press

UK government may ban American XL bully dogs after a child was attacked

By SYLVIA HUI
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's home secretary said Monday she is seeking "urgent advice" on banning a type of American Bully dog, highlighting an attack on a 11-year-old girl over the weekend.

Suella Braverman said she has commissioned advice on outlawing XL Bully dogs after police said they were investigating an incident in the central English city of Birmingham on Saturday, when a girl was injured by one of the dogs. Two men who intervened were also injured.

"This is appalling. The Amer-

ican XL Bully is a clear and lethal danger to our communities, particularly to children," Braverman wrote on social media. "We can't go on like this."

Police said the incident took place on a busy road after the dog broke free from its owner. The girl sustained serious injuries to her shoulders and forearms, and was recovering after hospital treatment. The animal was seized by officers and officials will consider what to do with the animal, police added.

For months, some campaigners have been calling for a ban on the XL Bully, which was originally bred

from the American pitbull terrier. Emma Whitfield, the mother of a 10-year-old boy who died after he was mauled by an XL Bully in Wales in 2021, questioned why authorities haven't acted sooner.

"Where were you when my son was killed?," she wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter. "Where were you when I was at Parliament asking for change? No-where. If you're going to do something, please do it." Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's office said it took the issue "extremely seriously" but did not provide more details on the proposed law change.



Britain's Home Secretary Suella Braverman leaves 10 Downing Street to go to the Houses of Parliament in London, on May 22, 2023.

Associated Press

Four breeds of dogs are currently banned in the U.K., including the pitbull terrier, the Japanese tosa, the dogo Argentino and the fila Brasileiro. The Dangerous Dogs Act also pro-

hibits owners from allowing their dog to be "dangerously out of control," which can be punished by fines and prison sentences of up to 14 years in serious cases. □

Cease-fire declared after days of intense fighting in Lebanon's largest Palestinian refugee camp

By FADI TAWIL

Associated Press

SIDON, Lebanon (AP) — An "immediate and lasting cease-fire" was declared Monday after a top Lebanese general met with officials from rival Palestinian factions, following days of fighting in Lebanon's largest Palestinian refugee camp, which left several people dead and dozens wounded.

It was the latest in a series of cease-fires that only lasted for hours before fighting erupted again. It was not clear if this truce will hold and whether rival groups will abide by it.

The announcement was made in Beirut by the General Security Directorate.

Gunfire and explosions were heard throughout the day inside the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp, claiming the life of one person. Stray bullets and shells hit residential areas in the country's third-largest city.

The fighting that broke out Thursday night after nearly a month of calm in Ein el-



A Lebanese army soldier stands guards at the entrance of Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh during clashes between members of the Palestinian Fatah group and Islamist militants near the southern port city of Sidon, Lebanon, Sunday, Sept. 10, 2023.

Associated Press

Hilweh refugee camp near the port city of Sidon between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah group and militant Islamist groups has left six people dead and more than 50 wounded according to

medical officials and state media.

The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, shared its own tally on Sunday saying four people were killed and 60 others wounded.

Clashes erupted as Fatah and other allied militant factions in the camp had intended to crack down on suspects accused of killing Fatah military general, Abu Ashraf al Armoushi, in the camp in late July.

One of the men suspected of being involved in Armoushi's killing, Izzedine Abu Dawoud, was critically wounded Monday inside the camp and rushed to hospital where doctors announced him as "clinically dead," Lebanese security officials said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Stray bullets hit the municipality building in Sidon damaging windows without hurting anyone, the state-run National News Agency said.

The public Lebanese University was closed and the Lebanese Army closed off the main highway that links Beirut with southern Lebanon near the camp and traffic was directed toward a coastal road due to the fighting.

"The city is suffering. The civilians in the camp are suffering," Lebanese legislator who represents Sidon Abdul-Rahman Bizri said in an interview with The Associated Press. □

Dominican president suspends visas for Haitians and threatens to close border

By MARTÍN ADAMES AL-CÁNTARA

Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — The president of the Dominican

Republic announced Monday that he has suspended issuing visas to Haitians, and he threatened to shut down land, air and sea traffic between the two neighbors

over their latest dispute.

President Luis Abinader's move follows the recent excavation of a supposed canal in Haiti that Dominican officials argue will divert water from the Massacre River and harm its farmers and the environment. The river, which runs in both countries, is named for a bloody battle between Spanish and French colonizers in the 1700s.

It is not clear who, if anyone, authorized the digging of the canal in Haiti.

"If the conflict is not resolved before Thursday, (officials will) completely close the border to air, sea and land commerce," the Dominican government said in a statement.

That would be an economic blow to Haiti, which gets much of its imports from the

Dominican Republic and where inflation has skyrocketed and poverty deepened amid a surge in gang violence.

It would also hurt Dominican businesses.

A study by the Dominican Republic's Central Bank said \$430 million in informal border trade was conducted in 2017 between the two countries, which share the island of Hispaniola. Of that amount, more than \$330 million represented exports to Haiti.

Haiti is also the Dominican Republic's third biggest partner in formal trade, with \$1 billion in exports to Haiti last year and \$11 million in imports, according to the Export and Investment Center of the Dominican Republic.

Last week, the Dominican

government sent a crew to monitor the construction of the canal from across the border, with officials telling local media that it wasn't an intimidation tactic but rather an offer to help detain, if necessary, civilians that might be working on the project without permission.

The excavation prompted Abinader last week to shut the border near the northern town of Dajabon, a crucial crossing for Haitians who sell and buy a range of goods there several times a week.

Former interim Haitian Prime Minister Claude Joseph recently defended the construction of the canal and accused critics in the Dominican Republic of being nationalists and racists. □



People bathe in the Massacre River, named for a bloody battle between Spanish and French colonizers in the 1700s, on the border with Haiti in Ouanaminthe, Dominican Republic, Nov. 19, 2021.

Associated Press

Aruba: the legend behind its name

(Oranjestad)—Most folkloric tales and legends in Aruba revolve around our indigenous ancestors, who came from mainland Venezuela, and discovered the island and made it into their new home. This particular legend tells the story of the birth of the Aruba name.

The legend follows the life of Arua, an indigenous Cacique originally from Aroa in the Falcon state in Venezuela in the year 50 AD. Arua had a son around the year 70 AD with his wife Shira, who they named Corobori. When Corobori was old enough, he joined his father on the usual boat trip to the islands of Curacao and Bonaire to gather salt.

On their way back to Mainland Venezuela, they were caught up in a heavy rain storm—a side effect from a passing, but far away, hurricane. Of course, because of the lack of motors and sail, their boat was left in the mercy of the heavy winds. After a while, the storm started to pass, and the clouds began to clear up. Finally able to see around them, the Cacique spotted land approximately an hour away. So, they started to row in that direction until they reached the coast.

Once they arrived on what they thought was Venezuela, they decided to stay the night and fix their kayak. The next morning, the Cacique ordered his son and a few warriors to go find any sign of population in the area: "Corobori," Arua said. "Don't come back without news. It's in your hands how long we stay here till we find our family. So, if you need to take a week to gather information, we will wait for you."

"Don't worry," Corobori replied. "As soon as we have any information, we will let you know." Armed with arrows and spears, backpacks filled with food and water containers, they set off. They climbed several small hills, but no sign of a village. They crossed different dry riverbeds, but no sign of anything. When the sun finally descended, they found themselves near a fairly tall hill and decided to climb it for a better view of a village. This hill was called Pan Dushi or Orcuyo, which today we call Hooiberg.

The next morning, they could clearly see that they have landed on an island, but an unfamiliar one at that. When Corobori went back to where his father was waiting, he told him the news: "Father Arua, you have just discovered an island, but it is not Curacao or Bonaire. Far in the south, we saw the big mountains of our homeland Venezuela, which we could have never seen on the other island. This leads us to believe we are on a new island. But that's not all. When the sun came up, we saw in the distance a glowing plain, which we think may be salt."

The Cacique was pleased to hear of his son's findings. He decided to stay a couple days on the newly-discovered island in search for salt. The next morning they ascended Hooiberg again and stayed to see if they could find nearby smoke, indicating an inhabitant village. But they found nothing. So they went back to their initial arrival settlement, now known as Santo Largo in Savaneta. The next morning they hiked along the Spaans Lagoen near the Mangel Halto Beach and reached the area of Bushiri. There, they boarded their kayaks and heading to what we know now as Malmok, where they found rocks of salt. After a couple days of exploring the island and gathering some salt rocks, they left for Venezuela, where they were reunited with their families.

Throughout the year, they travelled back and forth to Aruba, collecting salt. After a while they settled on the island, generations of families living along the coast. Corobori was the first indigenous inhabitant in our history to explore the entirety of the island.

Arua, after decades as the leader of his tribe, spent his last days on the island. Having reached 80 years old, he called for his family on his death bed. In his hammock, he said: "My children, many years have passed, and I've asked my warrior to bring me back to the island so I can laid to rest. The God of living has given me the gift of life to see my son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. But now he is calling me home. Corobori, my torch is now passed to you. Guide our people, and be the leader you were always meant to become. If one day you leave my island, do not forget that it is also yours. This is my last wish: When I die, bury me in our maize plantation."

And so when the Cacique passed away, his wishes were granted and he was laid to rest in the area we now know as the Paradera Cemetery. Where he used to live, they built the Paradera Church.

And that is the tale of what inspired the Aruba name. In the generations that lived or travelled back and forth to the island, there were many familiar names*, like Guadiriki, a warrior who was there when the island got discovered and his son, whom he called Huliba; Corobori and his children, Corodori, Camacuri and Turibana, Masiduri; and Malmok, the 13-year-old boy who alerted the Cacique when the Caribes attacked.

Familiar names: all these names are familiar to Arubans, as these are the names of places and plants on the island. □

Source: Un storia di e Indjan Arua (A story of the Indian Arua) by Adolf (Dufi) Kock





Rhythms Circus Company Aruba: putting Aruba's name on the world stage



Rhythms Circus Company Aruba is a talented group of young people working daily to present their art in the form of acrobatics, dancing, acting and singing. After an impactful participation in one of America's biggest talent shows, they are now bringing their amazing talent to Aruba!

In a show full of light, music, and with performances to famous musical figures like Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson and Tina Turner, the group consisting of 15 people from various countries delights the audience with their artistic prowess at the Paseo Herencia Mall, every Wednesday and Friday starting at 7pm. Each day has a different show, so you can attend both nights for the complete experience!

The group, under the leadership of directors and creators Diego Jaramillo and Yamila Hernandez are opening the doors to the ballroom to our local audience as well as our visi-

tors so that everyone can have the privilege of experiencing this wonderful show.

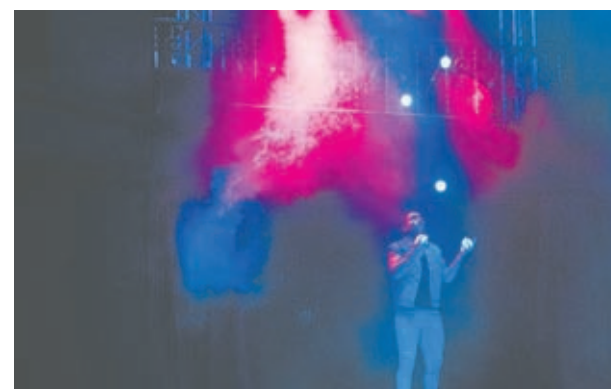
Hernandez explained that the idea for this project started in 2010 when she came to work in Aruba. After being on the island for a while she decided to stay and live here, and she met Diego Jaramillo, who is currently her partner. Together they came with the idea to establish a company together with other professional artists, with the goal of living from their art.

Hernandez says that the work is hard – all of the performers are professional artists, and while the production of the show is not a challenge for them, selling the idea proved difficult since at the time, there weren't any shows of its kind on the island.


America's Got Talent

Currently they are offering a show with music, choreography and at the end, they have a shocking acrobatics ending, one that was seen by thousands of people around the world when the group travelled to Los Angeles in the United States to represent Aruba in America's Got Talent. Hernandez said that the show was very important for them to meet the public present because people could experience this performance live and right before their eyes.

Their presentation in America's Got Talent "was incredible" and they were able to meet the jury and many other artists staying there for three months. But the exhaustion and physical toll was so great that Diego suffered an accident, and because of this, they had to cancel all future commitments.



Reservations and tickets


To make a reservation to see this incredible display of creativity and acrobatics, scan the QR code which will take you directly to their website for a booking. To find more information about RCCA, please visit their Instagram page @rccaruba. 

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

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Aruban snacks and where to find them



ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "kroket," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including

on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and kroketts at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing "batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flea markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place



to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have

to look for them! □

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



Episode 50; The Cassava

The Cassava should be considered a world heritage food



The cassave, cassava or yuca plant for Arubans appears to have originated in Brazil and Paraguay and especially around the Amazon and Orinoco river basins. The root of this particular plant is used as a staple to make all kinds of food and as a flat bread that looks much like a tortilla.

Manihot esculenta, commonly called cassava, manioc, yuca, macaxeira, mandioca, kappa kizhang and aipim, is a woody shrub. The Cassava has been spread by Amerindians throughout tropical areas of South, Central America and the Caribbean islands long before the arrival of the Europeans, and has become a world food just as corn, potatoes and tomatoes between

many who are Native to the American continent, staples which great civilizations has thrived upon.

The Cassava (*Manihot esculenta*) also known as yuca is sometimes confused with an agave species of North America. However, the plant yucca, written with two letter c, is what is referred to as the North American plant and yuca with only one c in what our story is about. The confusion may stem from cassava often being referred to as yuca.

Cassava or yuca is a root vegetable. The root can be eaten and in some cultures is it even used as a medicine. Cassava is used for tiredness, dehydration in people with diarrhea,

sepsis, and to induce labor yet there is no scientific evidence to support these claims.

The cassava is a basic food for many rural families with low resources. It has been considered a valuable food from times of the aboriginal ones forming part of the selection of roots and tubers that the Cubans commonly denominate as 'viandas.'

It is known that one of the most recurrent Caribbean indigenous foods in their diet was the yuca or casabe, food made from cassava that grew in these fields and predominated among Siboneyes, Caquetios and Taínos, who were engaged in harvesting and agriculture, respectively. This was

the first typical meal of the Caribbean nations – a substitute for the basic wheat bread diet. There was a saying widely used in popular Cuban slang and taken from the colonizers, "In the absence of bread, casabe."

In the United States, cassava root is also known by other common names such as, bitter cassava, manioc, tapioca, Brazilian arrowroot, and yuca.

Cassava and tapioca flour are not the same thing.

While sometimes the terms cassava flour and tapioca flour are used interchangeably, there are in fact distinct differences. Tapioca is a starch extracted from the cassava root through a process of washing and

pulping. The wet pulp is then squeezed to extract a starchy liquid. Once all the water evaporates from the starchy liquid, the tapioca flour remains.

Alternatively, cassava flour is the whole root, simply peeled, dried and ground. This means it has more dietary fiber than tapioca flour.

In Aruba, native farmers used to plant and eat this root in many ways. As cassava bread, the flour was mixed with water in to a mash and cooked on a hot iron or clay plate. It was also a stew ingredient eaten fried. The grounded yuca root was also cooked up and used as starch for clothing.

Words of a renowned DR multimedia artist, Geo Ripley, "The Cassava is an Amerindian cultural patrimony which has perpetuated in time and space till our days, and a symbol for us, of this Caribbean Sea, which always had unified us and never had separated us."

To get to know more about Aruba and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit to our renowned cultural center, where encounter sessions have been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etniana03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels. □

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside

of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

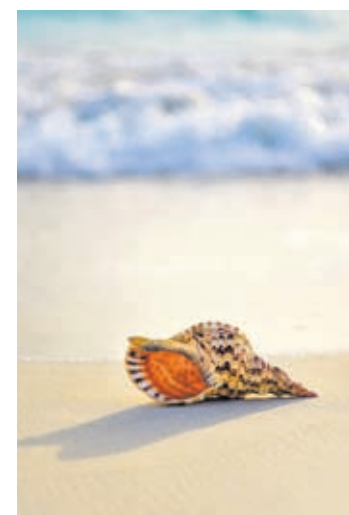
Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to pay

before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals

from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!



Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

Comcomber chiquito



This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vi-

tamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna



In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Game callers
 - 5 What the Devil wears, in a film title
 - 10 TV's "Green —"
 - 12 Braves legend
 - 13 Four-time Emmy winner for Outstanding Drama
 - 15 Dawn goddess
 - 16 Cheering cry
 - 17 Mule of old song
 - 18 Felt
 - 20 Davidson of "SNL"
 - 21 Noise
 - 22 Wallet bills
 - 23 Four-time Emmy winner for Outstanding Drama
 - 25 Pillage
 - 28 Justice Kagan
 - 31 Waiter's aid
 - 32 Leave high and dry
 - 34 Money machine
 - 35 Color
 - 36 CBS logo

S	T	A	G		S	T	A	F	F	
H	U	G	E		T	A	R	R	E	D
A	N	A	T		A	R	C	A	D	E
L	E	T	S	L	I	P		S	E	L
T	R	E	M	O	R	S		I	R	A
			A	D	S		T	E	E	N
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P	A	R	T		D	A	D			
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E	N	D	I	V	E		S	A	I	D
E	S	S	E	S		O	L	D	S	

Yesterday's answer

- DOWN**
- 1 Assesses
 - 2 Canyon
 - 3 California city
 - 4 Use a needle
 - 5 Hike route
 - 6 Unrefined
 - 7 Out of bed
 - 8 Give to charity
 - 9 What protractors measure
 - 11 Venus's sister
 - 14 Gets ready to ride
 - 19 Morose
 - 20 Omari Hardwick TV series
 - 24 Changes
 - 25 Put into words
 - 26 Aardvark of kids' TV
 - 27 Studio shooter
 - 29 2010s dance craze
 - 30 Whatever person
 - 33 Office fixtures
 - 35 "Bonanza" son
 - 38 Boar's mate
 - 39 Cobbler's tool

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13					14				
15				16			17		
18			19			20			
	21					22			
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25	26	27		28		29	30		
31				32				33	
34				35			36		
37			38			39			
40					41				
42						43			

9-12

AXYDI.BAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

9-12

CRYPTOQUOTE

O A E E , B W V G S A T C V I A S K A
F I A G A T X A U Q J Q A O X J S A I F B E E J I G
B Q B O B G K S U N A X U W A J X L V J B T S A C
O B S K S K A N V S S A I Q E B A G .

— "SKA EBSSEA FIBTXA"

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: ALL THE MONTHS ARE CRUDE EXPERIMENTS. OUT OF WHICH THE PERFECT SEPTEMBER IS MADE. — VIRGINIA WOOLF

A fall financial cleanse could get your spending back on track

By KIMBERLY PALMER of NerdWallet

If summer is a season of spontaneity and indulgence, then fall offers a counterpoint: It's a chance to get back on schedule, and back on budget.

"Summer, with travel and no school, tends to be a really spendy time. The fall is a nice reset," says Ashley Feinstein Gerstley, a certified financial planner and author of "The 30-Day Money Cleanse."

Gerstley says giving yourself a "money cleanse" offers a chance to carefully go over your spending and financial habits so you can make any necessary changes to end the year strong. With inflation and economic uncertainty in the background, that's no easy task, but putting in the extra effort now can pay off.

Here's a step-by-step guide to a fall financial cleanse that could help get your budget on track for the rest of the year:

START WITH A LOOK BACK

Nate Hoskin, a CFP and financial assistant at Brightside, a provider of financial wellness to employees, says the first step to a fall financial cleanse is to look backward, starting with your New Year's goals. He suggests checking on progress toward resolutions set in January so you can make any needed adjustments.

Then, Hoskin says, initiate what he calls a "financial audit," which means tracking all of your spending over the last couple of months by poring over credit card and bank statements. From there, you



In this Feb. 2, 2011, file photo, a wallet containing cash and a Visa card is displayed in Surfside, Fla.

Associated Press

can see what unexpected expenses popped up or why it has been so hard to save. "With inflation, it's extremely challenging, and you might find your budget didn't work even if you did everything right, because some things are out of your control," he adds.

He suggests giving yourself the chance to make small changes going forward without dwelling on previous missteps.

"Knowing where our money is going is a huge shift and can help us change our habits," Gerstley says.

TRY A BUDGET

If you don't yet follow a budget to help you track your spending, then the fall is a great time to give one a try, says Ashley Lapato, a financial expert on TikTok who posts as @TheOrganizedWallet and is a spokesperson for the budgeting app YNAB.

"I always think the first step is a zero-based budget," she says, which means every dollar is accounted for, including money set aside for savings and any debt payments.

"It forces you to confront spending decisions and to get really clear about financial priorities," she says, because you comb through every little bit of spending.

ESTABLISH A NEW MORNING HABIT

Lapato likes to start each day with a quick check of her own budget. For fewer than five minutes every morning, she logs in to her budgeting app or checks her bank account and financial goals.

"Doing this has changed my perspective. It puts me in the right brain space in the morning if I'm looking at bills, goals and things I want to accomplish," she says. Then, when she has to make spending decisions later in her day, her balances and goals are top of mind.

PRIORITIZE PAYING OFF DEBT

Stuart Boxenbaum, president of Statewide Financial Group, a financial advisory firm, says that with interest rates rising, this fall is also a great time to aggressively pay off high-interest or variable-rate debt, such as credit card debt.

"Before you sock away other money into savings, pay off high-interest debt if you're paying 18% or higher on a credit card, then it's a no-brainer. Pay off the debt first," he says, because yields on savings accounts are far lower than those interest rates. □

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U.S. approves updated COVID vaccines to rev up protection this fall

By LAURAN NEERGAARD

AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. approved updated COVID-19 vaccines Monday, hoping to rev up protection against the latest coronavirus strains and blunt any surge this fall and winter.

The Food and Drug Administration decision opens the newest shots from Moderna and Pfizer and its partner BioNTech to most Americans even if they've never had a coronavirus vaccination. It's part of a shift to treat fall updates of the COVID-19 vaccine much like getting a yearly flu shot.

There's still another step: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must sign off. A CDC advisory panel is set to issue recommendations Tuesday on who most needs the updated shots. Vaccinations could begin later this week, and both the COVID-19 and flu shot can be given at the same visit. A third vaccine maker, Novavax, said its updated shot is still being reviewed by the FDA.

COVID-19 hospitalizations have been rising since late summer although - thanks to lasting immunity from prior vaccinations and infections not nearly as much as this time last year. But protection wanes over time and the coronavirus continually churns out new variants that can dodge prior immunity. It's been a year since the last time the vaccines were tweaked, and only about 20% of adults ever received that earlier update.

"Vaccination remains critical to public health and continued protection against serious consequences of COVID-19, including hospitalization and death," FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks said in a statement. "We very much encourage those who are eligible to consider getting vaccinated."



This photo provided by Pfizer in September 2023 shows single-dose vials of the company's updated COVID vaccine for adults.

Just like earlier vaccinations, the fall round is cleared for adults and children as young as age 6 months. FDA said starting at age 5, most people can get a single dose even if they've never had a prior COVID-19 shot. Younger children might need additional doses depending on their history of COVID-19 infections and vaccinations. The FDA pointedly isn't calling this latest round a "booster" but instead a vaccine updated to better match the currently circulating virus. The new recipe targets an omicron variant named XBB.1.5 replacing outdated combination vaccines that mixed pro-

tection against the original coronavirus strain and an older version of omicron. And while even the XBB.1.5 variant is no longer dominant, FDA determined that it's close enough to coronavirus strains causing most COVID-19 illnesses today to offer good cross-protection. Like earlier versions, they're expected to be most protective against COVID-19's worst consequences rather than mild infection.

But while the FDA's decision allows for wide use of the updated shots, the CDC will decide how strongly different groups are urged to get them. Federal officials have said

the shots still will be free to most Americans through private insurance or Medicare. But for the uninsured or underinsured, the CDC is working with health departments, clinics and certain pharmacies to temporarily provide free shots. □

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From piñata to postage stamp, U.S. celebrates centuries-old Hispanic tradition

By S. MONTOYA BRYAN

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)

— The U.S. Postal Service on Friday rolled out its latest special edition postage stamps, paying homage to a tradition with global roots that has evolved over centuries to become a universal symbol of celebration.

The release of four new stamps featuring colorful piñatas coincides with a monthlong recognition of Hispanic heritage in the U.S. and the start of an annual festival in New Mexico where the handmade party favorites are cracked open hourly and children can learn the art of pasting together their own creations. Piñatas are synonymous with parties, although their history is layered and can be traced to 16th century trade routes between Latin America and Asia and the efforts of Spanish missionaries to convert Indigenous communities to Christianity. It was through dance, music and the arts including the making of piñatas that biblical stories were spread throughout the New World. Piñatas became a key part of celebrating Las Posadas — the festivities held each December in Mexico and



This image provided by the U.S. Postal Service shows four new stamps released Friday, Sept. 8, 2023, that highlight the piñata as part of a monthlong recognition of Hispanic heritage in the United States.

Associated Press

other Latin American countries to mark the birth of Christ. The religious origins are evident in the classic piñata designs of the seven-point star and the burro, or donkey, said Cesáreo Moreno, chief curator at the National Museum of

Mexican Art in Chicago. "Those early missionaries really were creative in the ways in which they wanted to teach the biblical stories to the Indigenous people," Moreno said. "Nativity scenes, piñatas, posadas — all those things really

worked well. They worked so well that they became a part of the popular culture of Mexico."

And they still are part of the Mexican and larger Hispanic communities, whether it's in Chicago, San Antonio or Los Angeles, he said.

"Culture has no borders. Wherever community gathers, they have their culture with them. They bring it with them and so the piñata is no different," he said.

Piñatas imported from Mexico line parts of Olympic Boulevard in Los Angeles. In Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico, people have turned their kitchen tables and garages into makeshift piñata factories, turning out custom shapes for birthday parties and special events. Inside Casa de Piñatas in Albuquerque, giant characters hang from the ceiling and crowd the walls. For more than half his life, shop owner Francisco Rodríguez has been bringing to life super heroes, dinosaurs, sea creatures and other animals with strips of old newspaper and a simple paste of flour and water.

Some customers come from El Paso, Texas, and others from as far away as Michigan. Rodríguez stared

out the window, watching traffic zip by as he waited for his work to dry. With residue still on his apron and the fans blowing, he contemplated the future of the industry, hoping the next generation will take an interest in the craft.

He said many older piñata artists have retired or closed up their shops and he's concerned the materials needed like newspapers will be harder to get as more things go digital.

It's likely piñatas will keep evolving as they have over the centuries. No longer are they made from clay ollas used for hauling water or storing food that would make a loud pop when cracked.

Gone are the shards that would litter the ground as children scrambled for the tangerines, pieces of sugar cane and candy that poured out.

The stamps were inspired by the childhood memories of graphic designer Victor Meléndez, who grew up in Mexico City and remembers spending days with cousins and other relatives making piñatas to celebrate Las Posadas. His mother also would make piñatas for birthdays. □

Millie Bobby Brown of 'Stranger Things' weaves a romance novel into a WWII disaster



This cover image released by William Morrow shows "Nineteen Steps" by Millie Bobby Brown.

Associated Press

By ROB MERRILL
Associated Press

The actor who plays Eleven on "Stranger Things" wrote a romance novel! That'll be the headline for too much coverage of "Nineteen Steps," so let's set that aside and consider the debut book from Millie Bobby Brown on its own merits.

It's a love story set in London, spanning the wartime years of 1942-1945. Nellie is the protagonist, an 18-year-old young woman who works as a secretary for the mayor of Bethnal Green, in the city's East End. She lives with her mother, father, brother and little sister, and

next door to her best friend Babs, whose brother, Billy, is besotted with Nellie after a childhood spent together. In the wake of the Blitz, Germany continues to selectively bomb England, forcing Nellie and the rest of Bethnal Green's citizens into an underground air raid shelter many nights. That's where those foreboding titular steps come in: Every time they descend to the shelter, Nellie "counted them like usual. Nineteen, turn right and seven more."

Spoiler fans can stop at this point and Google the "Bethnal Green steps,"

but what's the fun in that? Brown dedicates the book to her grandmother ("Nanny Ruth, who told me this story"), but the book is being marketed as fiction, with all the usual disclaimers about how any "references to real people, events, etc.... are intended only to provide a sense of authenticity, and are used fictitiously."

The story starts to sing when Nellie meets Ray, a U.S. Air Force pilot stationed nearby. The prose describing their first kiss fits the moon-eyed mood as the young couple falls hopelessly in love. "If ever she had

to pick a moment she'd want to last for eternity, she thought, this would be the one she'd choose," writes Brown.

Honestly, most readers could predict the rest of the plot at this point. The love triangle involving Nellie, Billy and Ray, plays a central role, and, of course, what happens on those steps, but the book is really about making your way when consumed by grief. And in that aspect it succeeds, painting a brave portrait of Nellie and her family and friends as they struggle to survive and find happiness in a world gone mad. □

Sabalenka and Djokovic are No. 1 in the rankings. Coco Gauff is No. 3 in singles, No. 1 in doubles

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**

AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP)—U.S. Open women's runner-up Aryna Sabalenka and men's champion Novak Djokovic each moved up one spot to No. 1 in the rankings on Monday. Sabalenka's first week atop the WTA, and Djokovic's record-extending 390th atop the ATP while women's champion Coco Gauff rose to a career-high No. 3 in singles and No. 1 in doubles. Sabalenka, a 25-year-old from Belarus, is the 29th player to top the women's list since computerized rankings began in the 1970s.

Her run in New York, which ended with a 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 loss to Gauff in Saturday's final, allowed Sabalenka to move up one spot and overtake Iga Swiatek, who slid to No. 2 after holding No. 1 since April 2022. Swiatek won the trophy at year ago but lost in the fourth round this time.

"All year, I've been playing well," said Sabalenka, who won her first major title at the Australian Open and reached the semifinals at the French Open and Wim-



Coco Gauff, left, of the United States, poses for photographs with Aryna Sabalenka, of Belarus, at the women's singles final of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023, in New York.

bledon. "I put her, kind of like, under pressure." Gauff, a 19-year-old from Florida, is next in singles, rising three spots from No. 6, and she and partner Jessica Pegula jointly went up to No. 1 in doubles after making it to the quarterfinals in that event. They had been together at No. 6 behind No. 1 Katerina Sinia-

kova before the U.S. Open, but Siniakova and Barbora Krejickova lost in the second round a year after taking the championship. This is the first time since August 2003 that the players occupying the WTA's top rankings in singles and doubles switched on the same day. Djokovic's 6-3, 7-6 (5), 6-3

victory over Daniil Medvedev on Sunday gave the 36-year-old from Serbia his 24th Grand Slam singles title, matching Margaret Court on the all-time list and giving him sole possession of the record for the professional era, one ahead of Serena Williams. Djokovic who already owned the mark for most

time at No. 1 in tennis by a man or woman entered the U.S. Open at No. 2 behind Carlos Alcaraz, who was the 2022 champion at Flushing Meadows but lost to No. 3 Medvedev in the semifinals.

Holger Rune remained at No. 4 on Monday, followed by Stefanos Tsitsipas and Andrey Rublev, who each moved up two places. Casper Ruud, last year's runner-up to Alcaraz in New York, dropped from No. 5 to No. 9 after exiting in the second round.

Ben Shelton, a 20-year-old American, soared into the top 20 for the first time, climbing from No. 47 to No. 19 with his first semifinal appearance at a major tournament.

He was eliminated by Djokovic.

Elena Rybakina stayed at No. 4 in the WTA rankings, followed by Pegula, and Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova went from No. 9 to a career-best No. 6 after reaching the U.S. Open quarterfinals. She was defeated at that stage by Madison Keys, whose semifinal run pushed her up six spots to No. 11. □

Associated Press

Aces clinch top seed in postseason, Liberty finish second

By **DOUG FEINBERG**

AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A'ja Wilson and the Las Vegas Aces will have homecourt advantage throughout the WNBA playoffs — a place they only lost once during the regular season.

The defending champions wrapped up the top seed in the postseason before they even stepped on the court Sunday by virtue of New York's last-second loss to Washington. It wouldn't have mattered if the Liberty won that game because the Aces beat Phoenix to finish the regular season 34-6.

"If you had said 34-6 to me back in May, I would have

jumped at that in a second," Las Vegas coach Becky Hammon said. "And here we are. The amount of energy and effort they put into being professionals, their approach to the game they were so good." Las Vegas will open up the best-of-three first round series Wednesday night against eighth-seeded Chicago, which enters the postseason for a fifth straight year.

The other half of Las Vegas' bracket features fourth-seeded Dallas against No. 5 Atlanta. The Dream ended up in a three-way tie with Minnesota and Washington in the standings, but earned the fifth-seed

through tiebreakers. The Wings-Dream matchup begins Friday night.

The Lynx will play at Connecticut on Wednesday night to open up that series. The second-seeded Liberty play Washington on Friday night. The two teams played a thriller to conclude the regular season on Sunday that ended when Brittney Sykes put in a lob at the buzzer to lift the Mystics to a 90-88 win.

"We wanted to send a message that you are going to have to see us all series long," Mystics guard Natasha Cloud said. "Regardless of the injuries, regardless of whatever you've got to go through a



Las Vegas Aces forward A'ja Wilson (22) celebrates after scoring a basket against the Phoenix Mercury during the first half of a WNBA basketball game Sunday, Sept. 10, 2023, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

really good team still and a team that's hungry, a team full of dogs. ... So we just wanted to make ourselves known and let it be known that this is going to be a really good series."

The playoff format for the second consecutive year will have the better-seeded

team hosting the first two games with a decisive third game on the lower seeds court if necessary.

The games are more spread out with four days between the first two contests of each matchup. Last season only had three days between games. □

Revenue-sharing with major college football players seems 'inevitable.' How could it be done?

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**

AP College Football Writer
When one of college football's top coaches makes a point of letting the world know he believes his players should essentially be paid, it gets a lot of attention.

"When student-athletes call it a game, corporate-types call it a business," Michigan's Jim Harbaugh said not long after the season began. "When the student-athletes call it a business, the corporate-types call it a game."

Overhauling the collegiate sports model to allow athletes playing at the highest levels of college football to share in the billions television networks are paying conferences for the media rights to their games is an idea gaining traction. Especially in the court of public opinion.

Even 10 years ago, suggesting players get a cut of the massive TV deals that fuel athletic departments would have been met with incredulity by those who work and follow college sports. Now, Harbaugh is not even the only high-profile coach in the Big Ten



Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh speaks during an NCAA college football news conference at the Big Ten Conference media days at Lucas Oil Stadium, Thursday, July 27, 2023, in Indianapolis. Associated Press

Conference to advocate publicly for revenue sharing with players. Penn State's James Franklin took a similar position in an interview with The Associated Press earlier this year.

The four biggest conferences have media rights deal of various lengths worth more than \$20 billion, with football driving most of that value. The Pac-12 is in the final year of a \$3 bil-

lion deal that was record-setting when it was signed in 2011, but soon surpassed by other leagues.

Skyrocketing coaches' salaries, an arms race of spending on athletic facilities and, most recently, drastic, revenue-driven conference realignment have made it harder to defend not giving college athletes a bigger piece of the pie. "It can harm or

eliminate some of the arguments that have been made in the past as to why college athletes shouldn't be paid," said Mit Winter, a Kansas City-based sports attorney. The Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics last week released the results of analysis that projected through 2032 the expenses of 54 public schools currently in Power Five conferences. It found

those schools will collectively will be spending only \$11 million more on scholarships and medical expenses for 30,000 athletes than they will on compensation and benefits for 594 football coaches.

While many in and around college sports believe revenue sharing with major college football players is inevitable, those in position to affect change are more cautious. The importance of gender equity, best encapsulated by the federal Title IX law, is a potential factor.

"We've had coaches share (ideas) and then we've had conversations ... Did you really think about the rest of that, like, what's on the other side of that observation?" Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey said.

If college sports leaders — who have been pleading for Congress to regulate the way athletes can be compensated for name, image and likeness endorsement deals — don't come up with a plan to have more revenue flowing directly to athletes one could be forced upon them. □

Helton teams up with organization to eliminate \$10M in medical bills for Colorado residents

DENVER (AP) — Retired Colorado Rockies first baseman Todd Helton is teaming up with the organiza-

tion RIP Medical Debt to help eliminate \$10 million in medical bills for residents around the state.



Retired Colorado Rockies first baseman Todd Helton talks to reporters before a baseball game Saturday, Aug. 19, 2023, in Denver. Associated Press

The program is set to start later this month, with recipients around Colorado receiving letters that notify them their medical bills have been paid in full. Medical expenses have been among the leading causes for bankruptcy in the United States.

Helton, who retired in 2013 and is the franchise's all-time leader in many statistical categories, said in a release Monday that he drew inspiration from his friend and philanthropist Ryan 'Jume' Jumonville.

"(He) recently took care of \$100 (million) in medical debt for the people in his home state of Florida," Helton said.

"I ... wanted to do some-

thing similar for the people of Colorado."

Helton worked with Jumonville in 2004, when the tandem donated money to health care programs in order to help University of Tennessee system employees.

RIP Medical Debt is a charity that aims to abolish medical bills for those who need financial assistance.

Since 2014, the not-for-profit organization has aided more than 6.5 million people in eliminating more than \$10 billion in medical debt.

"Medical debt is not only a financial burden; it also creates enormous mental health strain on patients and their families," RIP Pres-

ident & CEO Allison Sesso said in a statement. "We're grateful to Todd and Ryan for lifting up this critical issue and directly helping Coloradans who need it most." Helton spent his entire professional baseball career with the Rockies after being picked in the first round of the 1995 Major League Baseball draft. His No. 17 was retired by Colorado on Aug. 17, 2014.

The 50-year-old Helton won a National League batting title in 2000 when he hit .372. Helton was a five-time All-Star and won the Gold Glove three times for his fielding at first base.

Helton has been steadily gaining votes in his bid to make the Hall of Fame. □